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PREFACE

Preface

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This issue of the Journal of Scheduling contains 19 selected papers from the 2013 Multidisciplinary International Scheduling Conference: Theory and Applications (MISTA) that was held in Ghent, Belgium (27–30 August 2013).

The 2013 conference was the sixth in the series. Previous conferences have been held in Nottingham (2003), New York (2005), Paris (2007), Dublin (2009), and Phoenix (2011). The seventh conference has already taken place in Prague, Czech Republic (25–28 Aug 2015), with the eighth conference currently being planned.

The MISTA conference series aims to bring together scheduling researchers and practitioners from the many disciplines that engage in scheduling. The conferences attract submissions from areas such as Artificial Intelligence, Computer Science, Engineering, Manufacturing, Mathematics and Operations Research. The scope of the conferences covers a wide range of techniques and applications including (but by no means limited to) Delivery Scheduling, Heuristic Search, Evolutionary Algorithms, Local Search, Machine Scheduling, Job Shop Scheduling, Rostering, Timetabling and Sports Scheduling. The MISTA website (http://www.mistaconference.org) contains much more information.

MISTA 2013 was attended by about 150 people, who presented 114 oral presentations. These consisted of both full papers and abstracts. Both abstracts and papers appeared in the conference proceedings and they are all available from the conference web site (http://www.mistaconference.org).

Following the conference, authors were invited to submit revised versions of their papers to a special issue of the Journal of Scheduling. The 19 accepted papers are those that received supportive reviews after undergoing a review process in keeping with the expectations of an internationally recognised journal.

Prior to the conference, the local organizers of MISTA 2013 launched a scientific competition on the Multi-Mode Resource-Constrained Multi-Project Scheduling Problem, called the *MISTA challenge*. The competition's main purpose was to increase the level of knowledge and the power of scheduling algorithms through sharing experiences and results. Eleven teams submitted an algorithm to the final round of the competition, and presented the details of their approach during a special session at the conference. Awards were issued by Conundra, iMinds and OMPartners at the conference's closing event. Information about the MISTA challenge is available at https://gent.cs.kuleuven.be/mista2013challenge/.

We would like to thank all those that carried out reviews for both the MISTA conference and for the special issue. We recognise the time and effort involved in providing high quality reviews, and we are extremely grateful for all their help. Without this support from the international scientific community, neither the conference, nor the special issue would have been possible.

We would also like to thank the local organisation team (Ghent), with a special thank you to Debbie Pitchfork (Nottingham), for their help in organising the conference. Without their help, the job of organising the conference would be much more difficult.

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